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**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Kremmling Field Office
PO Box 68
Kremmling, CO 80459**

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

NUMBER: CO-120-2012-015-CX

PROJECT NAME: Fraser River Sanitation/Salvage/Fuels Reduction

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T. 1 N., R. 76 W., Sections 9 and 10: Grand County, CO; 6th
Principal Meridian

Quad Map Name: Granby, Colorado

APPLICANT: BLM

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: The Granby Ranch contacted the Kremmling Field Office in the fall of 2011. The ranch is currently managing its forests on private land and expressed concerns about dead and diseased trees on adjacent BLM administered public lands near the ranch and near the Sol Vista Ski Resort. The forest stand adjacent to Granby Ranch was selectively harvested in the 1960s and now consists of pockets of advanced regeneration intermixed with decadent residual overstory trees. Current forest conditions of the proposed treatment area include greater than 90% mortality of residual lodgepole pine from mountain pine beetle (MPB) and severe dwarf mistletoe (DMT) infestation of the regenerated lodgepole pine from the 1960s harvest. Other minor tree species in the project area include Douglas-fir, subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce, and aspen. Granby Ranch is constructing homes less than 50 feet from the public-private property line and has immediate concerns for BLM managed parcels regarding hazardous fuels and hazard trees.

The BLM is proposing to use mechanical or hand treatments to remove dead trees, MPB/DMT infested trees, and disease and wind thrown susceptible trees on approximately 51 acres (See Map). The Granby ranch has implemented forest management treatments on their lands to salvage dead timber, reduce hazardous fuels, and promote healthy regeneration of lodgepole pine. The primary purposes of the project are to salvage dead and dying timber, improve forest health conditions, stimulate natural regeneration and reduce hazardous fuels conditions adjacent to private property. Treatments would be accomplished using force account, traditional vegetative contracts, service contracts, stewardships, or by other means. Mechanical treatment would facilitate natural regeneration of these stands. Any of the above mentioned contracts would likely be negotiated with Granby Ranch, as there is no public access to the proposed unit.

All dead lodgepole pine and MPB and DMT infested live lodgepole pine trees would be removed. Trees that would likely be wind-thrown if left standing after harvest, would be cut as well (mostly large subalpine fir >9 inch DBH). All Douglas-fir less than 12 inches, all Engelmann spruce and subalpine fir less than 9 inches, and all aspen would be retained whenever possible. However, retained trees may be cut in order to facilitate harvest. Any cut trees, not removed, would either be lopped and scattered to a depth of less than 24 inches or piled and burned in the winter.

Access would be provided via private roads through Granby Ranch at the terminus of Grand County road 89, and written permission would be attained prior to sale.

Some temporary or snow road construction is anticipated to decrease skidding distances or provide access to landings adjacent to the main roads. Existing roads within the proposed unit may need to be maintained or improved in order to facilitate harvest. Temporary roads may be constructed on private and public lands. Temporary road locations would be approved by the BLM prior to development. If temporary roads are constructed they would be closed following harvest operations. Temporary roads would be outsloped, and roads and landings would be scarified, as necessary. Temporary roads, landings and, as necessary, major skid trails, would be seeded with a BLM-approved mixture of forbs and grasses by the Purchaser. Temporary roads, or portions thereof, would also be slashed-in.

Cull logs and tops of trees would be offered for sale as biomass. Remaining slash would be piled and burned, placed on temporary roads, or lopped and scattered. Following the completion of harvest, piles would be burned during the winter by the BLM when adequate snow depth is present and consistent with burn plan requirements and burning permit stipulations.

Post-harvest treatments may include a release and weed/thinning treatment (i.e. felling of residual undesirable live trees), and noxious weed control. The BLM would monitor disturbed areas for noxious weeds for two growing seasons after project completion. If noxious weed control is found necessary, actions would be coordinated by the BLM.

Design Features of the Proposed Action:

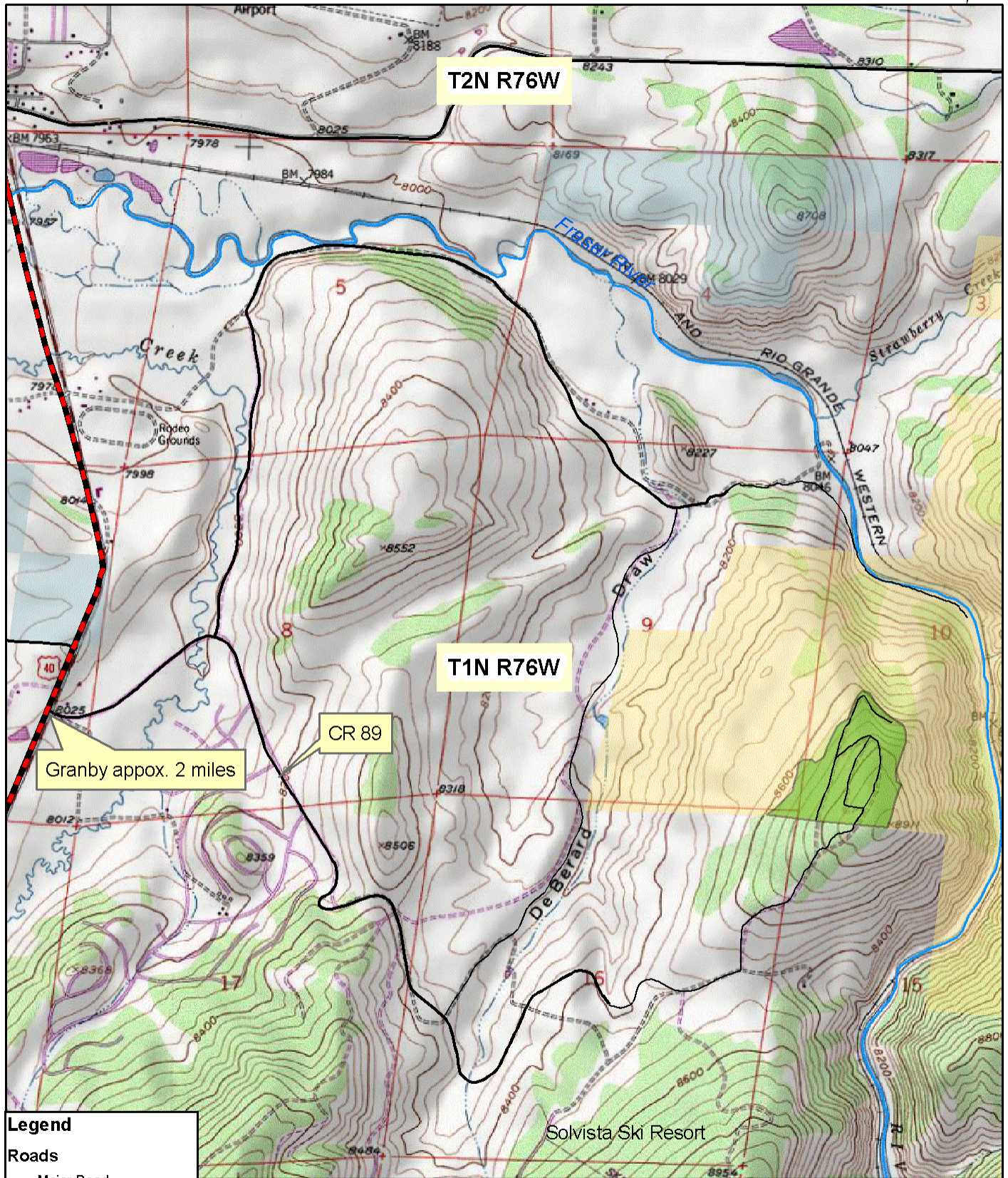
- Fences damaged from the timber salvage operation would be fixed by the contractor
- Survey monuments (brass cap monuments, bearing trees, mineral claim posts, etc.) would be located, flagged and protected.
- If an active goshawk nest is located within a timber sale unit, a 1/8th mile buffer around the nest site would be required.
- Harvesting operations would be limited to winter and after-the-thaw dry summer periods.
- Temporary road construction/reconstruction would not occur during periods of wet or frozen soils.
- If significant fossils are discovered during the preliminary inventory or during monitoring, a professional Paleontologist would be hired by BLM to complete a professional inventory and/or complete any needed mitigation.
- The project area would be signed notifying the public of the project before or when operations commence.
- Temporary road locations would be approved by the BLM prior to development. After harvest operations, temporary roads would be outsloped, and roads and landings would be scarified and seeded as necessary by the contractor. Temporary roads, or portions

thereof, would also be slashed in and signage or fencing would be constructed as necessary by the contractor to prevent new unauthorized trails from becoming established or being developed.

- When possible, the project would occur outside the big game hunting seasons between August 15 and December 15.
- Special Recreation Permits holders within the project area would be notified of the project commencement date.



Fraser River Proposed Sanitation/Salvage Area



Legend

Roads

- Major Road
- Primitive Road
- Trail

Land Status

- BLM
- State
- Private



1:24,000

Approximate Area= 51 Acres

No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the Accuracy, Reliability, or Completeness of this Data for Individual Use or Aggregate Use with Other Data.

Mapper: T. Adamson, M. Schiltz
Date: 11/16/2011
BLM, Kremmling FO
USGS Map: Granby
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PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: Kremmling Resource Management Plan (RMP), Record of Decision (ROD)

Date Approved: December 19, 1984; Updated February 1999

Decision Number/Page: II-6, page 10

Decision Language: *“To manage all productive forest land that is suitable for producing a variety of forest products on a sustained yield basis. This action will create a healthy forest environment through continued forest management practices.”*

The Proposed Action was designed in conformance with bureau standards and incorporates the Colorado BLM Standards for Public Land Health.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11, Number: 11.9 (C)(9), *“Commercial and non-commercial sanitation harvest of trees to control insects or disease not to exceed 250 acres, requiring no more than 0.5 miles of temporary road construction.”* None of the following extraordinary circumstances in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

Extraordinary Circumstances	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety		X
2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102(2)(E)].		X
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X
2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on		X

the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		
2.9 Violate a Federal Law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		X
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		X

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility	Date Review Completed
Cynthia Landing Rangeland Vegetation	Management Specialist	Range Mgmt.	03/30/2012
Megan McGuire	Wildlife Biologist	T&E Species and Wildlife	12/22/12
Bill B. Wyatt	Archaeologist	Tribal Consultation	10/23/2012
Bill B. Wyatt	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources	10/23/2012
Bill B. Wyatt	Archaeologist	Paleontology	10/23/2012
Paula Belcher	Hydrologist	Soil, Water, Air, and Riparian	1/13/2012
John Monkouski	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, Access and Transportation	12/23/2012

REMARKS:

Native American Religious Concerns: American Tribal consultation with affiliated tribes was initiated on January 22, 2011, and to date no tribe has identified any are of traditional cultural or spiritual concern.

COMPLIANCE PLAN: On-going compliance inspections and monitoring would be conducted by the BLM Kremmling Field Office staff during and after construction. Specific mitigation developed in this document would be followed. The operator would be notified of compliance related issues in writing, and depending on the nature of the issue(s), would be provided 30 days to resolve such issues. The BLM would monitor disturbed areas for noxious weeds for two growing seasons after project completion. If noxious weed control is necessary, BLM would coordinate that treatment.

NAME OF PREPARER: Tom Adamson

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Susan Cassel

DATE: 11/15/12

DECISION AND RATIONALE: I have reviewed this CER and have decided to implement the proposed action.

This action is listed in the Department Manual as an action that may be categorically excluded. I have evaluated the action relative to the 12 criteria listed above and have determined that it does not represent an extraordinary circumstance and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: _____

DATE SIGNED: _____